

November 15, 2007

VIA OVERNIGHT MAIL

Ms. Tracie Billington
Chief, Special Projects Section
California Department of Water Resources Division of Planning and Local Assistance
P.O. Box 942836 Street
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

**RE: WRITTEN COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSITION 50, ROUND TWO, CALL BACK LIST FOR THE
NOVEMBER 16, 2007 PUBLIC MEETING ***

Dear Ms. Billington:

I would like to thank you, Shahla Farahanak, and your staff members for meeting with representatives of the Upper Santa Margarita Watershed (USMW) Planning Group on November 13, 2007 to discuss and review the scoring of Upper Santa Margarita Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP). Although the agencies and stakeholders of the USMW feel that their plan scores were lower than warranted, we did gain a better understanding of the detailed review process and program requirements at the meeting that will help the USMW Planning Group enhance its future planning efforts for the benefit of the total watershed. We are preparing the "Consistency with Plan Standards" in a revised question and answer format as suggested by Craig Cross and other Department of Water Resources' staff at the November 13, 2007 meeting to facilitate DWR's second review of the IRWMP in relation to scoring and to guide future discussion to enhance the USMW IRWMP and the Planning Region's position in securing future funding.

As was discussed at the meeting, the agencies and stakeholders of the USMW were informed by the San Diego County Water Authority that they would be excluded from the regional water planning efforts of San Diego County Planning Group. This decision by San Diego was in direct conflict with the core goals of the Proposition 50 program to integrate the water management efforts of a total watershed so that cross-jurisdiction planning objectives could be most effectively implemented.

As a result of being excluded from the San Diego Planning Group efforts, the USMW Planning Group was left with no option but to embark on an ambitious and committed effort to prepare an IRWMP for the portion of the Santa Margarita Watershed left unaddressed by the San Diego County Water Authority effort. Thanks to the diligent and committed effort of the agencies and stakeholders of the USMW and the long history of their involvement in other planning efforts for the region, the IRWMP for the Upper Santa Margarita Watershed Planning Region was completed, adopted and submitted for consideration under the guidelines of Proposition 50, Round 2.

Although pleased that the USMW plan was approved, the USMW Planning Group feels that a lack of State funding will negatively impact the Upper Santa Margarita Watershed Planning

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Region's ability to quickly implement sound water supply, water quality, flood management, and environmental enhancement projects. These concerns are magnified because the Upper and Lower Santa Margarita Watershed areas are integrally linked, particularly with regard to water supply issues, and the success or failure of planning efforts in the Upper Watershed has a dramatic impact on the success of planning efforts in the Lower Watershed.

Accordingly, the stakeholders and agencies of the USMW Planning Group will continue their diligent efforts to integrate the regional planning efforts for the Santa Margarita Watershed and meet the demands of this fast growing area, while protecting the unique and delicate environmental, riparian, and watershed resources of the region. In furthering these planning efforts, the USMW Planning Group looks forward to working closely with the California Department of Water Resources and the State Water Resources Control Board.

Sincerely,



Dr. Brian Brady
General Manager
Rancho California Water District



Warren D. Williams
General Manager-Chief Engineer
Riverside County Flood Control and Water
Conservation District



Pam Nelson
President
Elsinore/Murrieta/Anza Resource Conservation District